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IRANIAN ANGLICANS ARE RELEASED

LONDON -- The sequel to the return of British missionaries Jean Waddell and John and Audrey Coleman is that in Iran, leaders of the Episcopal Church in Iran who have been in custody since August 1980 have also been released and are back with their families, according to a report from the Anglican Consultative Council here.

The tiny Iranian Church, whose Bishop, the Rt. Rev. H. B. Dehqani-Tafti, has been in exile in England, has been without leadership over the last seven months.

On August 9, 1979, lay Diocesan Administrator Demitri Bellos was arrested in Tehran. The following week the two remaining Iranian priests, the Rev. Iraj Muttaheddah, senior Commissary to the Bishop, and the Rev. Nusratullah Sharifian were also taken into custody.

The Rev. Iraj Muttaheddah was held in Evin Prison, Tehran, the same place where missionary Jean Waddell was kept.

The others were held at a secret detention centre on the outskirts of Tehran, with the Colemans, and with another Iranian layman, Mr. Mugadam.

Earlier this week the Bishop in Iran said he hoped that "a new era of better relations between our Church and the Iranian people" was in the offing.

He believes that it is too early to speculate about the future shape of Church work in Iran.

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